

**Silver Spring Transportation Management District Advisory Committee
(SSTMD AC) Meeting Summary
June 12, 2008**

Items 1, 2, 3 – Introductions, Approval of May Minutes, Chair’s Comments: Members and guests introduced themselves. Minutes from the May meeting were approved.

Acting Chair Charles Segerman mentioned that **Rob Padgett, a former member of this advisory committee, is now with the American Public Transportation Association (APTA)** and has been quoted in the news recently regarding the increases in public transit ridership. Mr. Segerman also discussed some of the differences between what residents prefer and what business owners prefer regarding the Purple Line, and the trade-off regarding whether there would be an extra stop in Silver Spring, versus going underground. he noted this advisory committee still has not taken a position on what the best option would be, and requested that further Purple Line discussion be added to the next agenda.

Mr. Segerman mentioned the third annual “Dump the Pump” Initiative, June 19th, a national initiative of APTA. The general impact of high fuel prices was briefly discussed, including increasing use of public transit. **Sandra Brecher** said this has become a major challenge for Ride On, since they cannot add the necessary capacity to the system in order to meet the growing demand until the County builds the North County depot.

Mr. Segerman said that he would like to see on the Purple Line the arrival time of the next train accurately given, particularly if the trains went underground. **Ms. Brecher** said that real time information is in the works for the Ride On system, but in the short term the accuracy of the real time information is the challenge.

Item 4 – Updates: **Ms. Brecher** announced that Bike to Work Day was a success. More than 150 people showed up at the Silver Spring pit stop, despite the rain. **DPWT Director Arthur Holmes** attended the event and spoke to the group. He also spoke individually with many of the participants and remained at the event for quite some time.

The contract for the Transit Center Interim Operations Site (IOS) has been awarded to the firm Foulger Pratt. The final terms have not been negotiated. Foulger Pratt was the lowest bidder, and also was deemed “best value.”

Work on the IOS will start late summer/early fall. Whenever the start day actually is, **Ms. Brecher** assured the group that the County has a plan for all elements of the transition, including moving the buses to the new temporary off-site stops.

Ms. Brecher discussed how those with visual impairments would be accommodated during IOS construction. Directional signs and signs at stops will use both raised letters and numbers and Braille. She showed the committee an example of one such sign. Only a small number of the visually-impaired read Braille, since many lose their vision later in life, so raised letters and numbers are preferred by many visually-impaired people. This type of sign will be put in the same location relative to every single bus shelter so visually-impaired customers will know

exactly where to find it. This is only a pilot, but if it is successful the hope is to eventually put this at every bus stop throughout the county.

Mr. Segerman noted that these raised signs must be fairly expensive. **Ms. Brecher** agreed, saying that they must be constructed to withstand the elements and be resistant to vandalism.

Mr. Segerman noted that it is generally a drawn out process to get pedestrian way-finding signs in place in the Silver Spring CBD, especially since the state must be consulted if the location is a state road. Since the county is apparently able to get all of its IOS and bus signs installed relatively quickly, is that because most of them will be on county streets? **Ms. Brecher** said that, yes, in most cases the IOS signs are not going on state roads, avoiding Colesville, for example. The state, however, is very much involved in the project, so would not impose any undue burdens in this regard.

Mr. Segerman continued that the Silver Spring Chamber and Regional Center have encountered more difficulty in working with the state to install way-finding signs.

Ms. Brecher stated that the county has encountered this type of difficulty, in placing taxicab signs on Wisconsin Avenue in Friendship Heights. After submitting an example of the sign the county wanted to use, the state ordered changes to the color and overall appearance of the sign in order to bring it into conformity with the Maryland Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). Additionally, there were restrictions on placement of the sign such that it could not, as a pedestrian sign, fall within a driver's "cone of vision" on a state road.

Ed Furgol asked if Congressman Van Hollen had been approached about the status of the supplemental funding for the IOS. **Ms. Brecher** answered that the supplemental funding is a county responsibility; there is no Federal involvement in obtaining these funds. However, the County funding is necessary to match the Federal contribution, so Congressman Van Hollen is probably very supportive of the allocation of the necessary funds by County Council.

Ms. Brecher said that the new TRiPS logo is done, and that both Commuter Stores (Silver Spring and Friendship Heights) will have the same telephone number: (240) 773-TRIPS. Callers will press 1 for Silver Spring, or 2 for Friendship Heights.

Item 5 – Presentation on Commuter Connections, Washington Council of Governments (MwCOG): **Nicholas Ramfos**, Director of Commuter Connections, presented an overview of Commuter Connections, MwCOG's regional network of transportation organizations that assist and encourage commuters in the Metropolitan Washington region to carpool or use alternative methods of transit.

Benefits of the program include:

- Management of traffic congestion
- Reduction of vehicle emissions
- Support of local marketing efforts to promote benefits to employers and employees:
 - Attract and retain employees
 - Show workers more commuting options

- Reduce stress/fuel costs/travel time
- Improve quality of life

The geographic area served by Commuter Connections is large. Many commuters come from as far away as Pennsylvania and West Virginia. Commuter Connections has one of the highest carpool rates in the country, at about 12%. Part of what Commuter Connections does is match people in carpools and vanpools. Commuter Connections reduces approximately 130,000 vehicle trips per day, and about 2.5 million miles of travel. This saves nearly 2 tons of Nitrogen Oxide (NOx) emissions, and nearly 1 ton of other volatile organic compounds (VOCs).

Cost Effectiveness:

- \$0.15 for every trip reduced
- \$.01 for every mile reduced
- \$10,000 per ton of NOx emissions
- \$20,000 per ton of VOC reduced

Mr. Ramfos said that the vast majority of their funding comes from federal monies. In order to keep getting federal funding, there are specific environmental protocols that must be met, specifically NOx and VOC emissions.

Meeting adjourned at 10:10 AM

Next meeting date: July 10, 2008

**Silver Spring Transportation Management District Advisory Committee (SSTMD AC) Attendance
Sheet
June 12, 2008**

Voting Members (12)			
Name	Affiliation	Present	Absent
Chamber Members (3)			
Vacant			
James S. Polk, Chairman	Technology Service Corporation		X
Tom Collins	Atlantech Online	X	
Citizens Advisory Board Members (3)			
Edward Furgol	Kemp Mill, Four Corners, East SS	X	
Charles Segerman, Vice Chairman	North & West Sector Plan Area	X	
Andy Wexler	CBD Resident	X	
TMD Employers less than 50 employees (3)			
Julian Leidman	Bonanza Coin		
Suvita Melehy	Melehy & Associates		
Cathy Wilde	Solid Waste Assoc of North America	X	
TMD Employers with 50 or more employees (3)			
G. Michael Price	Discovery Communications	X	
Robin Goudy	Social & Scientific Systems	X	
Geoffrey Kreig	Merchant Link		X
Non-Voting Members (4)			
Sandra Brecher, DPWT Transit Services	DPWT Director or Designee	X	
Chuck Kines	M-NCPPC		X
Sergeant Thomas Harmon	Montgomery County Police		X
Staff			
Terrie O'Steen	DPWT, Commuter Services		X
David Kantor	DPWT, Commuter Services		X
Jim Carlson	DPWT, Commuter Services	X	
Guests			
Nicholas Ramfos	COG/Commuter Connections	X	